

(Washington, D.C.) - Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23) released the following statement in response to President Bush's veto of the Emergency Supplemental bill yesterday and failure of passage for the Veto Override today:

"The responsible thing for the President and Republican Members of Congress to do was to provide our troops with both the necessary equipment for battle and the necessary plan for the future of Iraq. Unfortunately, the Republicans have failed once again to do the responsible thing and instead scuttled this important bill. The American people have spoken loud and clear - they want us to put partisan politics aside and provide a new direction in Iraq.

"The Iraq Accountability Act would have supported our troops, providing \$4 billion more for our troops than the President requested. Aided by the Republicans in Congress, the President has vetoed \$1.7 billion for BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) recommendations, \$1.8 billion for veterans' health care, and \$3.3 billion for Department of Defense health programs. This bill included \$30 million to build a polytrauma center designed to give returning soldiers with multiple severe injuries comprehensive health care including mental health services, so they can return to civilian life with dignity.

"Four long and hard years after "Mission Accomplished," we will no longer give a blank check to an Administration that has failed to provide legitimate benchmarks for success. Starting today, the President and Republicans must begin to work with Congress to find a responsible solution that does not compromise the safety of our troops or the care of our veterans."